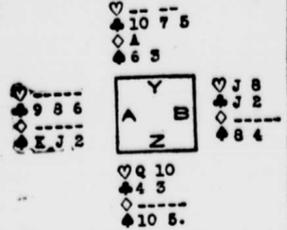


PROBLEMS FOR "SUN" READERS TO SOLVE

A Six Card Nullo at Bridge With Astonishing Variations.

Bridge problem No. 305, which was credited to B. G. Braine, was actually the last six cards of No. 300, with suits and sizes changed so as to present the position under an entirely different aspect. Very few recognized it.

Several of the cracks said that No. 300 could not be done. They had in mind one minor variation only, because from them that the problem was perfect. This variation was when A won the first heart trick and returned the club, so as to throw Z back into the lead at once. Mr. Braine sent me the position to try six as it would then stand, and asked how Y and Z were going to force four tricks on A and B. That made problem No. 305. Here is the distribution:



This is a nullo. There are no trumps and Z is in the lead. Solvers were asked if four tricks could be forced on A and B, and if not, why not? The latter part of the question was intended to bring out what was necessary in order to make No. 300 a perfect problem.

Some very interesting solutions have come to hand, and a large number of correspondents express the opinion that the trifling slip in No. 300 that left an opening for the defense should not detract from the merit of the problem, as it is so easily remedied.

A curious thing about No. 305 is the number of those who express their astonishment at the labyrinth of possible variations in the six cards. Walker McMartin, L. S. Hart, Jr., and Charles M. Root, are among those who analyze the situation at length. They reject the heart opening as immediately fatal, and bring the question down to a club or a spade, with all the complications of holding up, discarding and playing the lead.

The situation picked by every one to show that A and B cannot be forced to win four tricks is Z's starting with the spade ten, which A wins. An immediate return of the suit throws the lead to Y, who has kept the six, while B gets rid of the eight. Y must now lead away from the club.

If Y leads the club seven it holds the trick. The next club B wins, and leads a losing heart, only three tricks for A and B. If Y leads the club six, instead of the seven, B wins it and returns the club, so that Y must win a club and diamond trick.

In case Y gives up the spade six on the first trick, Z is left with the high spade for the second round, but then A leads clubs, beginning with the nine. If Y plays the ten, B wins, returns the suit and A holds it with the eight. Now the small spade forces Z to win two hearts.

If Y plays the interior club, he can win the second round, but he cannot give Z a spade discard without giving B one at the same time, so he will have to win a spade and a diamond, and end it by putting A in with the club club.

If Z starts with the smaller spade, A wins and returns the club nine, which all three players duck. B wins the next club and leads the losing spade, so that Z wins two tricks in hearts.

If Z opens with the club A plays high, Y puts on the seven and B wins with the jack, returning the suit so as to exhaust Z. When A puts on the higher of his remaining clubs Y cannot afford to win it or he wins another. This leaves A in the lead the top spade, on which he plays the eight. The device of spades results in Y's winning with the six and taking a club and a diamond, or in Z's winning with the five and taking two hearts.

This analysis shows that A and B win only three tricks if they defend themselves properly, which brings us to the question of the simplest change that will make the problem sound. One way would be to transpose the ten and eight of hearts, so that Z could lead that suit without winning both tricks in it, but this would spoil the rest of the problem. The cracks are apparently agreed that the best way is to transpose the five and four of spades, which were diamonds in the original.

This would make it possible for Y to give up the six when Z led the ten, so that if A led another spade B would win the trick. Now B must lose a heart and a club or A must win two club tricks.

The pretty play would be for A to win the spade and lead the top club. Y plays the seven, B wins with the jack and returns the club deuce. Y wins with the ten to prevent B from getting the spade discard if A were allowed to lead a third club. The losing spade now gives B a heart trick as well.

Strick to say a number of correspondents thought the problem sound as published, some sending six or eight variations in which the required four tricks could be forced upon A and B, but of course the defense in these is weak.

Those who thought the original analysis and suggested the proper change were G. E. Hengel, C. F. Johnson, W. P. W., Walker McMartin, M. L. C., John H. Whiting, A. W. Haddon, Reuben Strong, O. H. Boston, J. M. H. H., H. H., D. Perry, D. A. W., George B. Glover, Roscoe C. Harris, E. M. Frost, M. E. W. P. H. Fairfield, James E. Cox, J. W. Vortz, Charles M. Root, H. C. Connor, Frank H. Young and Harry Roosevelt.

While the cracks are still studying over that British nullo here is something not quite so difficult:

BRIDGE PROBLEM NO. 307.



Now black cannot give up a man without losing the move, and if he is not careful where he goes he may lose the game.

Correct solutions from: E. H. Edwards, Kazony, Charles N. Hall, D. E. Brand, E. L. Brandon, Joseph Elliott, James A. Green, C. M. Burn, Oscar Erickson, D. A. W., E. J. Walker, A. D. Davis, J. B. Morse, W. P. Kenyon, L. S. Hart, Jr., William D. Clarke, A. J. B., A. J. Ford, James H. Lynd, William Deane, Conrad A. Neidert, Benjamin Simon, John Day, James C. Pinkerton, P. J. M. Carey, L. H. Berge, J. H. Beaufort, Robert H. Hixon and T. C. Watson.

Several demonstrated a win for black, but of course the play was defective. The notice is hereby given that a special test is in preparation for the cracks on Christmas week. On December 29 The Sun will publish an original problem arranged especially for members of the Sun Checkers Club, which will probably take several hours of the Christmas holidays to solve.

If P. H. Friedman will send the game which led up to the position he submits as a problem, The Sun would be glad to analyze it. The original problem and asking questions about them should always send full post office address.

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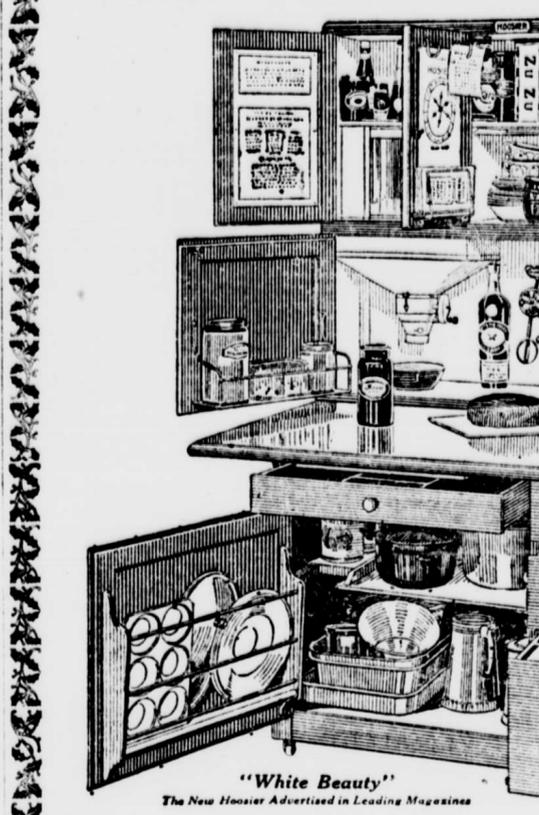
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